

MAN KILLED IN CAR ACCIDENT

A Bennion man was killed early Thursday morning when the Honda Accord he was driving was broadsided by an older model car whose driver allegedly ran a stop sign. Dustin Thompson died shortly after he was hit by Morgan D. Johnson, 18, at 200 S. 1000 West in Salt Lake City. The victim was pronounced dead at LDS Hospital. An investigation is continuing, said Salt Lake Police Sgt. Kyle Jones.

JUDGE DENIES VENUE SWITCH

A Logan judge has denied a request to move the trial of three men accused of terrorizing 38 people at a former retreat. Arthur Peasnell, 22, Chris Doerr, 20, both of Tooele, and John Jeppson, 51, of Pocatello, Idaho, are charged with six counts each of aggravated assault. Jeppson also is charged with one count of forcible sexual abuse, a count that 1st District Judge Clint S. Judkins refused to dismiss Thursday. The trial is scheduled to begin Monday. Peasnell's lawyer, Arden Lauritzen, argued pretrial publicity had prejudiced jurors, necessitating the change of venue to Rich County. But Cache County Attorney Scott Wyatt said Lauritzen was fishing for a venue where jurors might be more sympathetic. Jeppson's lawyer argued the forcible sexual abuse charge stemmed from his client searching a teen-ager, and should not have been filed. Doerr's lawyer asked for her client's case to be separated from the rest because he wants to make a deal with prosecutors. Judkins refused both requests. The young people climbed around a barbed-wire fence surrounding the former retreat. The men, who were hired to guard the property, allegedly confronted the youngsters with guns, tied ropes around their necks, handcuffed others and forced them into an empty swimming pool. Property owners asked prosecutors not to file trespassing charges against the youths.

SUSPENDED AGAIN

Gary Pendleton's license to practice law has been suspended again, and he plans to appeal again. The Utah State Bar's request to suspend Pendleton was granted Wednesday in 5th District Court. The Utah Supreme Court recently ended a previous order, issued in mid-February, that barred Pendleton, 47, from practicing law. Supreme Court justices said evidence didn't show Pendleton to be a threat to the public or his clients. His license was suspended after jurors in December 1997 found him guilty of one count of possession of methamphetamine. He received 36 months' probation. Billy Walker, senior counsel for the Bar's Office of Professional Conduct, said the Bar filed its motion based on Rule 19, which covers whether a felony conviction reflects on a lawyer's honesty, trustworthiness and fitness. Senior Judge Boyd Bunnell agreed. "It is inconceivable to the Court that an attorney sentenced [on] a felony drug charge can continue to appear as an officer of the Court," Bunnell said.

SL Tribune July 10, 1998
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Metro.

Medina claimed he had not been in Utah for at it four

knife and ordered Livsey to pull over, the witness said. They all exited the car and San-

Prison Guard Faces Trial for A

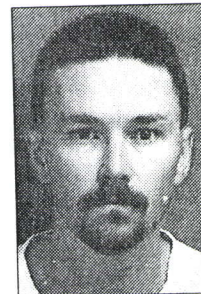
BY STEPHEN HUNT

THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

A Utah State Prison guard was ordered Thursday to stand trial for allegedly forcing two inmates to engage in sex acts.

Jerry Gene Kessler, 34, is charged with six counts of first-degree felony forcible sodomy and one count of second-degree felony forcible sexual abuse. He faces up to life in prison, if convicted.

The allegations surfaced after one of the inmates spit Kessler's semen into a rubber glove following oral sex and asked his girlfriend to smuggle it out. DNA testing later purported-



Jerry Gene Kessler

ly matched the semen to Kessler. The 21-year-old inmate said he collected the sample after enduring three months of abuse by Kessler, who was a sergeant in the prison's kitchen.

The inmate said he cooperated with Kessler because the guard threatened to have him transferred to a maximum-security area of the prison, or have him beaten or killed by other inmates. A 31-year-old inmate said he let Kessler masturbate and anally penetrate him after the guard said, "I'll make your life hell."

Defense attorney Greg Skordas unsuccessfully argued that Utah's sodomy statute does not cover situations between inmates and guards. He likened it to sexual harassment between a boss and a employee.

Skordas also questioned whether it is reasonable to assume Kessler had the power to follow up on the alleged threats.

But prosecutor Susan Hunt no

Driver Pleads Guilty to Killing J

BY STEPHEN HUNT

THE SALT LAKE TRIBUNE

A 26-year-old Salt Lake County man who killed a jogger after falling asleep at the wheel of a car pleaded guilty Thursday to third-degree felony automobile homicide.

Robert James Longaker admitted causing the death of Leslie A. Stephens, 47, following a night of drinking and smoking methamphetamine.

The case was assigned to Senior Judge Douglas Cornaby after all 3rd District judges recused themselves because the victim's sister is court clerk Marian Graves. The defendant faces as much as five years in prison when he is sentenced Sept. 2.

At about 8 a.m. on May 24, the victim was jogging with her husband, Richard Stephens, at 731 S. 900 East, Midvale, when Longaker's Jeep crossed three lanes of traffic and struck her. Longaker then jumped from the Jeep and fled on foot.

He was initially charged with second-degree felony auto homicide and class A misdemeanor leaving the scene of an injury incident.

As part of a plea-bargain agreement, Longaker was to tell victim's family members about the events leading up to the accident, possibly in preparation for a civil lawsuit against the tavern Longaker patronized the night before.

Longaker told police he had smoked methamphetamine ab